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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/08/2016
TAGS: [IS](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [IE](#)
SUBJECT: IRELAND'S VIEWS ON DECEMBER GAERC

REF: A. STATE 196226

[B](#). STATE 195044
[C](#). STATE 194456
[D](#). STATE 187642
[E](#). DUBLIN 1385
[F](#). DUBLIN 1327

Classified By: Embassy Dublin Pol/Econ Chief Joseph Young
for reasons 4.1 (B) and (D).

Summary

[1](#). (C) POLOFF delivered Ref A - D demarches on December 7 to Mary Connery, Deputy European Correspondent, Department of Foreign Affairs. Ireland continues to support work aimed at lifting the arms embargo on China, though does not expect a relaxation of the current embargo to emerge from the GAERC. Connery said she expects Turkey's accession to the EU to be debated at the level of the European Council rather than the GAERC. Ireland's positions on the Balkan states, Israel/Palestinian issues, Lebanon and Iran remain unchanged from November. Connery noted that the EU and EU member states had collectively contributed 3.7 billion euro to Afghanistan's reconstruction since 2002. End summary.

China Arms Embargo

[2](#). (C) In regards to USG concerns about lifting the arms embargo on China (Ref C), Connery said that there would be a wide-ranging discussion (over lunch) of the EU's relations with China. However, she indicated there was little likelihood that consensus would be reached on the issue. She pointed out that Ireland would continue to support the EU position as stated in the 2004 EU-China Summit Joint Statement, i.e., that work should continue toward lifting of the embargo.

Turkey/EU Accession

[3](#). (SBU) Connery said that Ireland supports Turkey's accession to the EU and would not like to see more than eight chapters suspended. At the same time, she said, Ireland also supports the provisions of the Ankara Protocol. Connery opined that the GAERC outcome would be inconclusive and that the matter would be bumped up to the next meeting of the European Council.

Kosovo & Serbia

[4](#). (SBU) Connery indicated that Ireland's positions on Kosovo (Ref D) and Serbia are unchanged from the November GAERC (Ref F). She said that these matters would not be much discussed at the GAERC since progress in both areas is more

or less on hold until after the January 21 Serbian elections.

Bosnia

¶5. (SBU) Connery reiterated Ireland's position that Bosnia should not be granted an EU Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) until it met the requirements.

Israeli-Palestinian Issues

¶6. (C) The Israeli-Palestinian conflict will probably not be discussed at the GAERC, according to Connery. Rather, she said, it will be on the agenda of the next European Council meeting. She took on board USG concerns about the French/Spanish initiative, but did not comment.

Lebanon

¶7. (C) Connery indicated that Lebanon continues to be a source of frustration for the EU. She opined that there would only be a short discussion -- and no conclusions -- at the GAERC. (Note: Ireland supports the democratically elected government of Fouad Siniora (Ref E).) Connery had no comment regarding USG concerns about the UN Human Rights Council resolution on Israel.

Iran

¶8. (C) Ireland will continue to follow the EU lead in negotiating with Iran and assessing the need for sanctions (Ref E), according to Connery. She said that diplomatic negotiations, led by the EU-3, remain the preferred course of action.

Afghanistan

¶9. (U) Connery said that Ireland supports EU reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. She noted that the EU and EU member states had collectively contributed euro 3.7 billion to Afghanistan's reconstruction since 2002.

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